

PROPERTY PLANNING COMMON ELEMENTS

COMPONENTS OF MASTER PLANS

REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Overview

The DNR purchases land to manage and protect natural resources and to provide recreational opportunities to all residents and visitors to the State of Wisconsin. Through the land acquisition program, wetlands, forests, scenic areas, prairies, savannas, wildlife and fish habitat, rare species habitat, glacial features, and other resources are being protected and managed.

The Real Estate Section within the department's Bureau of Facilities and Lands acquires land through fee title, easements, donations, and leases. The section also conveys leases, easements, agreements, and permits associated with land ownership. The section also manages the selling of land no longer necessary for the state's use for conservation purposes. It implements the payment in lieu of tax system (PILT), resolves trespass settlements, and engages in other activities aimed at preparing the land for long-term public use and benefit.

Real Estate Management and Master Planning

Through master planning, the department's entire real estate portfolio is reviewed and analyzed. The topics listed below are all considered and reviewed during a planning process. This analysis allows the department to identify future real estate management goals, which are then included as a part of the master plan.

Land Acquisition

The department acquires lands under the authority of s. 23.09(2)(d), Wis. Stats., from willing sellers. At times, it is in the best interest of the department and landowner for the department to acquire partial rights to a property (easement or lease). Acquisition priorities are identified in the master plan and are, in most cases, visually represented through the department's project boundaries.

Acquisitions for department properties vary from year to year and are based on several factors, such as resource management or recreation needs and the availability of funding, which may be from a variety of sources.

Land Sales

The department's Natural Resources Board (NRB) may, at times, sell lands and structures under its jurisdiction, except central or district office facilities, when the NRB determines that those lands are no longer necessary for the state's use for conservation purposes (s. 23.15(1), Wis. Stats.). Upon receiving payment, the department deposits the funds into the conservation fund to be used exclusively for the purpose of purchasing other land for the creation and establishment of public hunting and fishing grounds, wildlife and fish refuges, state parks, and/or land in the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (s. 23.15(4), Wis. Stats.).



Conveyed Easements, Access Permits, and Land Use Agreements

Conveyed Easements provide access across state property for utilities, town roads, county highways, and, in some cases, individuals. Easements are permanent and cannot be changed by a master plan. Access Permits provide access across state property to private landowners adjacent to department lands. Land use agreements provide for a variety of uses on a department property that are consistent with the property's master plan, such as bike trails.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes

The department makes an annual payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) under ss. 70.113 and 70.114, Wis. Stats., to the appropriate municipality for all property it owns in fee title. More detailed information on how the department pays PILT may be obtained at <http://dnr.wi.gov/> by searching for the keyword "PILT".

Project Boundaries and Stream Bank Eligible Streams

Project boundaries and stream bank eligible streams (SBES) are established areas on the landscape, created by a Natural Resources Board (NRB) action, as a preferred area where the department may acquire land. Through the planning process, changes on the landscape and changing recreation and resource needs are identified. These factors may lead to proposed changes to the boundary or SBES in a master plan, under the authority in Manual Code (MC) 2212, MC 2105.2, MC 2210.03, s. 23.094, Wis. Stats, and NR 51.60, Wis. Admin. Code.

Acquisition Authority

An acquisition authority is created by the NRB, which allows the department to acquire land for a specific purpose/land use. An example of this is the authority to purchase land for Devil's Lake State Park. This authority identifies a targeted area on the landscape within a project boundary to be used for state park purposes. Another example is the Statewide Public Access authority, which allows the department to acquire lands adjacent to rivers and lakes to provide public access to waterways. This authority does not have specific project boundaries; it is statewide in nature. As such, it allows lands to be acquired along these water features anywhere in the state. New acquisition authorities, or changes to existing acquisition authorities, are sometimes proposed as a part of the master plan.

Acquisition Goal

When an acquisition authority is created by the NRB, an acquisition acreage goal for that authority is also established. This is the total acreage that can be acquired by the department under that specific acquisition authority. Acquisition goal changes are sometimes proposed as a part of the master plan.

Property Naming

Under the authority of Manual Code 2281.1, the NRB has the authority to name a property that has not been expressly named by the Legislature. Property name changes are sometimes proposed during a master plan.



Property Re-designation

Under the authority of NR 1.415, Wis. Admin. Code, the NRB has the authority to periodically review land use designations (acquisition authorities) to determine whether a re-designation will secure better management. Property re-designations are sometimes proposed during a master plan.

